## **GOVERNOR'S** MESSAGE.

Virginia Affairs and Issues Ably Discussed.

LYNCHINGS IN THE STATE

Severely Condemned and Heroic Remedies Proposed.

WALTON ELECTION LAW DEFENDED.

Secures Crier at the Polls and a Free Expression of the Will of the People.

THINKS ONE CONSTABLE SUFFICIENT

Lawlessness in Alexandria County Condemnel in Unmeasured Terms.

HOW HE WOULD BREAK UP GAMBLING

Recommends That the County Judges be Given Extraordinary Powers.

INCREASE OF CRIME AMONG NEGROES

He Says Statistics Show That the Education of the Negro Has Failed to Bring About a Decrease in Crime - A Law Prosed Aimed at Prize-Fighting He Asks for Generous Appropriations for Pensioning Confederate Sol-Duty of the State to Protect All Property, and Defends His Course in Using the Military, by Which He Saved Bloodshed - Opposed to a Constitutional Convention-Protection of our waters and the Oyster Industry - Public Debt and the Lee Monument-The Public

Following is the full text of Governor O'Ferrall's message, submitted to the Legislature yesterday;

Debt.

Commonwealth of Virginia, Governor's Office, Richmond, Va., December 4, 1895.

To the General Assembly:

To the General Assembly:
In obedience to the requirements of the
Constitution of Virginia, you have assembled to enact such laws as may, in
your wisdom, be necessary to promote
the welfare and advance the prosperity
of the people, whose sovereign will has
made you their representatives.

I congratulate you upon the recovery,
in great measure, of the Commonwealth
from the long financial depression under
which she has been suffering, the resumption of work in many of her industries so long closed, and the prospect
of an early general revival of business
and trade.

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I congratulate you upon the general good health with which our borders have been blessed, and our freedom from serious epidemics and contagions which have afflicted other sections of our land.

You have before you ninety days for work, every available hour of which will be required for the faithful and intelligent discharge of your important duties.

My own long experience is that it is the rule with legislative bodies to delay, and only to enter earnestly upon their

and only to enter earnestly upon their labors when compelled by the nearness of adjournment. It is in these hast days of a session that ill-matured legislation of a session that in-manufer registation occurs. I respectfully suggest, in the interest of the Commonwealth and people, that your honorable bodies depart from the usual custem of procrastination and enter promptly upon the consideration of matters which may demand your atten-

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION. It is likely that the question of a convention to frame a new Constitution will be brought before you. With due deference to the sentiment which prevails, to some extent at least, in its favor, it is my opinion that a convention would be impolitic, and involve an unnecessary ex-penditure of money.

So far as I am informed, the reasons

advanced for a convention are, that th expenses of the State government could thereby be lessened by returning to the old system of county courts, reducing the number of circuit judges and superintendents of public free schools, abolishing the office of county treasurer, and im-posing the duties now performed by him upon the sheriff, and changing existing

criminal laws in many particulars. Let us consider them in their order: First. A return to the old system of istices' courts.
In this there would be no economy, for

the aggregate pay of the justices who constituted the county courts prior to the present Constitution was fully as much, I think, as the aggregate salaries of the county judges, which are graded accord-ing to the population of the respective counties. Under the old system the county courts had no jurisdiction in felony es except against free negroes, where cases except against tree negroes, where the penalty was not death; and I do not suppose it is seriously proposed to confer such jurisdiction now, for if it was not considered wise when the justices were men of superior intelligence, it could not be at present. Under our enlarged suf-frage and citizenship, it is a well-known fact that in certain sections of the State fact that in certain sections of the State the justices in many instances are in-ferior in character as well as intelligence. Then, if felony cases are not to be tried county, but in the circuit courts, apeedy trials could not be had, and in-justice would be done to the innocent and too tardy justice meted out to the guilty. Becond. Reduction of the number of

Becond. Reduction of the number of circuit judges.

In my opinion nearly every judicial circuit in the State is as large as a proper regard for the administration of justice will admit. Though the population of the present territory of Virginia has greatly increased and business has grown immensely, we have about the same number of circuit judges as in the same terber of circuit judges as in the same ter-ritory in 1890, and the uniform salaries less now than then. If the circuit courts are to have original criminal jurisdiction in all felony cases, it must be admitted that the number of circuit judges would nt would be infinitely better how to increase the number of circuits, and the number of terms annually of the circuit courts, and confer upon the circuit courts exclusive original jurisdiction in felony cases. If this were done, appeals would be directly to the Court of Appeals, and this would result in a more speedy determination of such cases and a large decrease of criminal expenses.

Third, Reduction of number of superintendents of schools.

intendents of schools.

The salaries of these officers, like the salaries of county court judges, are graded according to the population of their respective counties and cities. In the cities and larger counties the time of the manual larger counties the time of the

If the emoluments are inadequate it will be difficult to induce proper persons to accept the positions, and the Commonwealth may suffer in the collection of her revenues. Besides, the sheriffs have generally enough to engage them in zerving civil process, enforcing checutions, arresting offenders, attending the sessions of the courts, and performing the duties which belong peculiarly to their offices. Again, with the taxes to collect and executions to enforce, the sheriffs would held a power which might prove to be dangerous.

they should be carefully considered and the pruning knife applied whenever it can be done with due regard to the en-forcement of the laws, the preservation of order and the demands of justice cannot

the questioned.

But this, as well as the proposed changes before mentioned, can be accomplished, if desired, either by legislative enactment or by the people by amendment to the Contilution—either a safer and much less expensive mode than a constitutional convention.

STATE VALUATIONS.

A general reassessment of the lands of the Commonwealth being required this year, it was feared there would be a considerable reduction in values, and a consequent falling off in the revenues. This apprehension gave me deep concern, for with a decrease in the revenues to any considerable extent there would be actious embarrassment in meeting our obligations and the expenses of our State government. I am, however, pleased to be a concerned to the concerned to the content of the co government. I am, however, pleased to learn that the reassessment shows that there has been an increase in our real estate values of \$11,946,791 over 1850, and not a decrease. So that Virginfa, despite the heavy financial depression was

estate values of Fig. 30, over 1886, and not a decrease. So that Virginia, despite the heavy financial depression under which she, in common with the whole country, has been suffering for several years, has gene forward and added appreciably to her taxable real estate values. It seeaks volumes for her material strength, and the courage, energy, and industry of her people.

Our treasury has been able to meet promptly every demand made upon it, and there is no reason to fear that loss will be sustained by the defaication of any who have been entrusted with the collection of the State's money. Scarcely at any period in her history have the finances of Virginia been in better condition, and the present fiscal year promises at well as the last two.

PUBLIC DEBT.

PUBLIC DEBT.

Little need be said in reference to the public debt. It has been settled upon a basis honorable to the State and saturate tory to the creditors, and I can conceive of no condition of affairs that can arise to renew any contention over this question.

tion.
Under the provisions of an act approved January 31, 1834, holders of a portion of the unfunded debt, who were barred from the unfunded dobt, who were mercel from the provisions of the act approved February 20, 1892, by their failure to accept within the time prescribed, were permitted to accept the terms of the last-named act, and the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund were authorized and empowered to place these holders on the same footing as if they had actually accepted the terms of said last-numed not cepted the terms of said lest-named not within the prescribed time. In pursuance of the power conferred and as directed, the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund advertised for the reception of said gut-

advertised for the reception of said out-standing bonds for exchange, and bonds to the amount of \$1,44,917.91 were surren-dered and funded, and, in lier thereof, new 2-3 per cent bonds for the aggregate sum of \$1,015.14.59 were issued.

It is well known that the United States holds registered bonds of the Common-wealth. In May, 1234, a demand was made for the payment of these bonds taggre-gating, as stated by the Treasurer of the United States in his demand, \$50,000 prin-cipal), and refused upon the following im-prognable grounds, as set forth in the prognable grounds, as set forth in the letter of A. W. Harman, Esq., Treasurer of Virginia, to Hon. D. H. Morgan, Treasurer of the United States:

First. Because no appropriation had ever been made to pay them.

Second. Because the bends were resuch

before the dismemberment of the State of Virginia, but no credit was allowed for West Virginia's "equitable proportion" of and bonds.
Third. Because the Government of the

United States is indebted to the Commenwealth of Virginia for advances mad

1894, to \$1.506,622.04.

It is a matter of record that for forty-five years Virginia has been demanding payment of these advances and loans, and ever since the United States became the older of the registered bonds aforesald rightia has been ready to give due credit or the same upon the United States' inlebtedness to her, but to the present time she has failed to secure a settlement, one branch or the other of Congress has repeatedly, but at different sessions, recentred Virginia's claim, and passed bill

ognized Virginia's claim, and passed bills to pay her. Other States have been paid the advances made by them, but Virginia, as patriotic and true as any, and so liberal in her territorial donations to the Union, has been left to continue her occurrents.

I would recommend that your benorable bodies memorialize Congress for an adjustment of the matters between the United States end Virginia, and take such other action as may, in your juckment, promote a settlement of accounts between them.

By joint resolution of the General As-By joint resolution of the General Assembly, approved March 5, 1894, entitled "A joint resolution to provide for adjusting with the State of West Virginia," &c., a commission was created and authorized and directed, under conditions specified, to negotiate with the State of West Virginia a settlement and adjustment of the proportion of the public debt of the original State of Virginia proper to be borne by West Virginia. This commission was duly organized, and, after mission was duly organized, and, after the conditions specified had been com-piled with, notified me that they were ready to perform their duty, whereupon I communicated the said joint resolution, as directed therein, to the Governor and Legislature of West Virginia by letter, a copy of which is appended bureto.

The commission will make a report to

The commission will make a report to you as to their action and the result of their effort, and I shall not anticipate it. I will only say that nothing vas accomplished, and, so far as I can see, Virginia is no nearer a consummation of her desire to effect a settlement and adjustment with West Virginia than she was twenty years or more ago.

THE PENITENTIARY.

The number of convicts in the penitentiary has been increasing monthly ever since my administration began. On the list day of October, 1894, there were lifteen hundred and thirty; on the list day of October, 1895, there were sixteen hundred and sixteen. While I am an earnest advocate of the public free school system, I am constrained to say that its advantages do not seem to improve the morals of our colored people, or restrain crime among them, for the number of colored criminals is constantly growing larker, and of the sixteen hundred and sixteen. and of the sixteen hundred and sixteen in the penitentiary on the lst day of October, 1896, twelve hundred and seventy-nine were colored, which is a smaller statesmen and orators, scientists and literati. I hope to be able to second your

perintendents is wholly occupied, if they do their duty; in the small counties they are not continuously engaged, but if additional compensation should follow. The salaries are so fissed and efficient efficient system attainable, and will not tolerate any change which may tend in the most remote degree to impair or weaken the system or place it in the hands of incompetent or inefficient superintendents.

Fourth Abolishment of the offices of county and city treasurers are abolished, and the duty of collecting the revenues imposed upon the sherffs, there will simply be a change of persons without any saving, unless the commissions are reduced. Should this be done? I think not. The respensibilities are great, and fine business qualifications are required, and if the emoluments are inadequate it will be difficult to induce proper persons to accept the positions, and the Commonwealth may suffer in the collection of the northern and western States in the pentiters and jails, while in Virginia there were only about eight in of the colored colored citizens of the northern and western. States in the pentiters and jails, while in Virginia there were only about eight in of the northern and western. States in the pentiters in every five thousand. This proves either in the relive of Richmond, to insure an ample appropriation of the closured to virginia, or that our pour pour the stands, and preserve it from the van-dal's hand. It now belongs to the State, and western States in an amonument in the city of Richmond, to insure an ample appropriation to improve the spot upon which the every five thousand. This proves either in every five thousand. This proves either in every five thousand. This proves either the collection of the northern and western States in the pentitent

walls of our prison, now overflowing.

It is gratifying to me to be able to report that the management of our Denitoniary, during the last two years, has been most satisfactory. For the uscal year ending on the 20th day of September, 1884, the net revenue was about \$3,000. The health of the prison has been good. The discipline has been rigid, but merciful. There have been no escapes.

By an act of the General Assembly, approved January 22, 1884, the superinten-

Chesapeake and Ohio railroad, twenty-six miles from the city of Richmond, containing 52 acres, was bought for \$16.

purchase.

The superintendent, under the direction of the board of directors, has erected buildings and stockaes, purchased stock and implements, and had, on the 1st day of October last, nearly two hundred convicts at work. He commenced operations about the beginning of the fiscal year of 1884-5, and has had in cultivation acout four hundred acres, and has raised under products, and been very succession, considering the unfavorable season. In addition, a large amount of cleaning up, ditching, &c., has been done. It is my opinion that the enterprise will be a success, and justify the action of the General Assembly in authorizing the purchase, for, notwithstanding the several diought, the farm was almost self-sustaining, the deficiency amounting only to \$1,42.65.

penitentiary, I call your careful attention to the recommendation of the board of directors as to better prison arangements. Their recommendation is wise, and I hope you will find it possible, under the plan suggested by the superintendent, to carry it out. It can well be imagined what the condition must be when the buildings were erected for not more than one-third of the number now confined in them. There are constantly, on an average, fifty cofored beys, sixteen years of age and under, serving sentences. The crimes of which they are kenerally guilty are grand larceny and house-breaking. Associated as they are, on account of the limited space, with confirmed criminals, there is no hope that confinement will reform them, but absolute certainty that when their terms expire they will go out into the world only to enter upon careers of crime. Humanity and public policy demand that an effort be made, as far as may be, to reform them while their minds are still susceptible of good impressions. If it were possible, I would be glad to see a colored reformatory school established, but, as this may not be practicable at present, some provision should be made for separate apartments for them.

There is nothing in which the people feel a deeper interest than in our State heeplals, and nothing for which they are more willing to be taxed than for their support. Every natural heart goes out in sympathy to the unfortunate inmates, and every humane man is ready to

one them, and bend every energy to approve them year by year. I think I can report that all of our ospitals are being well conducted. The uperintendents and their assistants are atthful in their attentions, carnest in heir efforts, and kind and gentle in their reatment, while the boards of directors. earment, while the boards of directors e constant in their watchfulness are assidnous in the discharge of their duties, taking nothing for granted, leaving noth-

PUBLIC FREE SCHOOLS. It will be no less pleasing to you than t is to myself to know that our free chools are doing well and the interest

schools are doing well and the interest in them steadily increasing.

The school statistics for the year closing July 31, 1855, will show that there were 6,033 white and 2,331 colored schools opened, with 235,533 white and 129,633 colored pupils enrolled; and 6,211 white and 2,031 colored teachers. The revenues for the year were as follows: Local funds, including county, district, and city levies, \$80,025.54. State funds, including proceeds of State school tax, appropriation by State school tax, appropriation by General Assembly, Interest on investments of the Literary Fund, \$5:1,251.95 -mak2og a total of \$1,824.287.77 - The expenses were as follows: Teachers' sainries, \$1,282.86.85; real estate, buildings, &c. \$123,856.32; school apparatus, &c., \$23,33.13; all other expenses, \$238,85.66-making a total of \$1,807,302.40. In this statement no account is taken of balances carried from the preceding year. Every year shows a slight advance in the revenues applied to the support of the system, but there is urgent need of more money. The term is too short in country schools, teachers' salaries are insufficient, and there are other demands which must be met to bring our system abreast with the schools

for me to urge you to give our system all the support in your power.

About a year ago the charge was made that patrons of the Virginia schools were paying more for their school-books than the patrons of the schools of other States were paying for the same books. A careful and exhaustive investigation was instituted, and the charge was found to be utterly groundless. There is no State utterly groundless. There is no State which has more favorable contracts than

Virginia.

THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.

It becomes my painful duty to report to you the burning, on the 27th day of October last, of the rotuna and annex of that grand institution of learning, the

cicied with a substantial fron rathing, sufficiently high to prevent injury or defacement.

That I will strike a responsive chord in your breasts. I doubt not, when I recommend that the utmost liberality be shown to Jependent soldiers and dependent widows of soldiers who served in Virginia commands in the Confederate army. The Confederate soldier fought for principle, not spoils; particular prompted him, not bounty money nor pensions. Thirty years have passed since the war between the States closed, and all who participated in it have passed the meridian of life, and numbers of them are in old age. Experime incident to that service has brought disease to many, rendering them incapable of earning a livelihood, while others received wounds which have so weakened them physically as to make them dependent. In many instances the widows of those who were killed or died during the war, or since, from wounds indicted or diseases contracted in the service, have been reduced to poverty, and, either by reason of advanced age or invasted basilt, are comdefence, and at her benest, I am team-dent I will appeal not in vain for gen-erous appropriations for pensions and in maintenance of that noble institution known as the Confederate Home. Every loyal Virginian will applaud you for re-cognizing in as full measure as possible Virginia's sacred obligation.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE. You will find the report of the Board of Agriculture interesting, and I recommend its careful perusal. The Board direct your attention to "the suggestions for legislation on various subjects" contained in their last annual report, and I hope you will give their suggestions thoughtful consideration.

The encouragement of immigration and

The encouragement of immagration are the construction and maintenance of good roads are earnestly urged; the importance of the Weather Bureau is presented, and the hope expressed that the State weather service will be organized and placed upon a firm basis; the value of soil tests is regarded by the board as great, and the need of a topographical great, and the need of a topographica and geographical map of Virginia is con

dered imperative.
The appropriation for the past fisca year for the conduct of the past fiscal year for the conduct of the Department of Agriculture was \$12,000, and the board reports that the sum of \$9,100 was derived from the tax on fertilizers, of which \$6,-110 was turned into the State treasury, in pursuance of law.

The wealth and glory of a country are presented by trade, but, it is in the control

increased by trade, but it is in the culti-vation of the soil that a country's real strength and stamina are found.

I have already referred to the calamity which has befallen Virginia in the par-tial destruction of the University, but the board of visitors and the faculty and, and every arrangement has been de to continue them, and to provide for large number of students during the free University year. he Medical College continues to enjoy

The Medical College continues to enjoy its well-carned reputation, the Fernals Normal School is progressing finely, the Military Institute has its barracks well filled, and retains its high position in the esteem and affections of the people of the South; the Agricultural and Mechanical College is doing excellent work under its superior management, and its matriculations are far in excess of any previous year in its bispers. William and Mary year in its history; William and Mary College, so rich in historic memories, is moving forward with rapid strides; the Deaf, Dumb, and Blind Institution is keeping up its standard, and is still an rnament to the State, and the Normal and Collegiate Institute ranks with the est of its 1 ind.
All of these institutions merit, and will

eive. I am sure, all the support you give them in justice to other press

PROTECTION OF OUR WATERS.
The wealth of Virginia in her waters could hardly be overestimated.
According to the Baylor survey, there are 20,216.3 acres of natural oyster beds, rocks, and shoals, and 60,000 acres of planting ground—of "barren area disposable by the Commonwealth for the preparation of oysters." Of course, the natural rocks cannot be rented, but the immense area outside is leasable, and if mense area outside is leasable, and it could be let at an annual rental of on dollar per acre—the price fixed by stat ute—it would yield as much revenue as le now realized from real and personal peop never, under any circumstances or con-ditions, be leased, but suppose the State can realize from half of it, how magnifi-cent will be the return!

But to preserve the value of these prep-

agating grounds we must guard the seed

agating grounds we must guard the seed ground.

How important, then, it is that we look well to the protection of the natural beds from the dredger, at home and abroal. While we have had some trouble with resident dredgers, incessant have been our troubles with non-residents. In the Tangier and Pocemoke sounds until recently. So persistent and frequent had been these incursions by non-residents that during the session of the last General Assembly I recommended an appropriation. Assembly I recommended an appropriation for the purpose of strengthening our oya-ter police navy, and the sum of 210,50 was set apart to that end. Without extaries purchased in the city of New York a steamer of light draft, yet scaworthy and armed and equipped her. See wa named "Accomac," and with the schoon named "Accounce," and with the schoolers "Tangler" and "Pocomeke," already in service, she was kept on the State line in the sounds during the oveter season of 1894-5/At the end of that season, to save expenses, the "Pocomoke" was retired until the commencement of the present season, when she was again placed in commission, the "Accounce" and the "Tangler," however, remaining at their posts during the past summer, and all are now on duty.

posts during the past summer, and all are now on duty.

It gives me pleasure to state that since the "Accomac" was placed on the line no depredation of any consequence has occurred. I believe the appropriation was judicious, and that the strengtucining of our cyster police force has had the effect of deterring non-residents from crossing our line, defying our laws, and preying upon our oyster beds, as they had been doing for many years.

The officers commanding the steamer and schoeners have been yighlast and

and schooners have been vigilant and faithful, and are worthy of the highest

commendation. \*:)

CAPTURED BOATS

On the evening of the 18th day of February, 1844, a large number of oyster boats, owned and manned by citizens of ginta oyster police schooner, "Tangier," from her post in said sound, and took possession of the valuable oyster grounds known as "Old Woman's Marsh," and in defiance of law, dredged thereon for oys-

ters until they were driven out by the oyster police steamer, "Chesapeake," under orders from me, on the night of February 18th. In the pursuit of the marauding vessels the schooner "William E. Price" and the schooner "G. W. Stevenson" belonging, respectively, to Benjamin F. Marsh and Edward Lowe, residents of the State of Maryland, were taken by the "Chesapeake." It was alleged that these boats had been pursued by the "Chesapeake" into Maryland waters, and there captured. The General Assembly of the State of Maryland, on the 18th day of February, 1824, passed a joint resolution declaring that the act was an invasion and violation of the territory of Maryland, which could not be passed by without notice and reparation, and, appointing a committee, who, in conjunction with the Governor of that State, were directed to call the attention of the Governor and Legislature of this State to this violation of the territory of Maryland, and demand redress and reparation. The joint resolution was laid before me by the committee, and by me communicated to the General Assembly of Virginia; whereupon a committee was appointed by a joint resolution adopted March 2, 1824, to act jointly or separately with a like committee to be appointed by the General Assembly of Maryland to investigate and assertain the facts in correction with the conflict between the "Chesapeake" and dredging vessels, and the capture of the "William E. Price" and "G. W. Stevenson," and report the facts ascertained, together with their conclusions, to the Governor of this ters until they were driven out by the port the facts ascertained, together with their conclusions, to the Governor of this Commonwealth. On the 18th day of June, Commonwealth. On the 2th day of June, 1854, the said committee made their report to me, setting forth that the evidence was conflicting as to the exact locality of the capture of the said vessels. They reported, further, that it clearly appeared that the "Chesapeake" pursued the dredging fleet into Maryland waters, and, after an able and exhaustive discussion of the an able and exhaustive discussion right of Virginia to pursue into Mary-lane waters, they concluded that inas-much as the authorities of that State and not theretofore refused to extradite an of-fender against Virginia's laws, and it not appearing that the attention of the au-thorities of Maryland had been called to therities of Maryland had been called to the continuous incursions by residents of that State into Virginia waters, Virginia could not, at the date of the capture, claim the right of pursuit. They further concluded that under all the circum-stances, and relying upon the full co-operation of the authorities of Maryland with our own officers to prevent similar troubles in the future, a suitable acknowledgment of regret should be made to the

dgment of regret should be made to the levernor of Maryland, and recommend-d that the captured venets be tendered o him. A copy of said report is hereto

solting from the long-continued and let statent depredations upon our variable byster grounds by residents of Mary'and OYSTER LAWS.

OYSTER LAWS.

The oyster laws have been enforced as far as possible, and the commantant of the "Chesapeake," Capt W. E. Hadrins, is entitled to special notice. He may been active and watchful, fearless and ill'gent, in the discharge of his responsible duties. Violations are occurring often, but many violators have been arrested and lived. In various instances.

less there was a palpable mistake ma and no harm can result. Care should THE VOLUNTEER MILITIA.

In the future, as in the past, she will if her soldiers ever a bulwark against degr, ever ready to uphold the law, matain the peace, vindicate the right, a protect the humblest of her citizans his guaranteed privileges, whenever civil authority proves too weak. The fitta is the sword arm of the Camma wealth," to be used cautiously, but firly. In vain will agitators and distarbe and those with anarchistic tendenseek to accuse a prejudice straints the veck to accuse a prejudice straints the seek to arouse a prejudice against the vo-unteer soldiers of a State, for they ar not hirelings nor allens, but they com from the people, and, prompted only be patriotism, they easilst for the declares of the people of their State and her institu-

olunteers, for surely they have shown helr devotion to her by maintaining and their devotion to her by maintaining and keeping up the efficiency of their organizations in spite of the meagre supporting have received from her. Last year each cavairyman and aftilleryman 12.10 from the State. I do not think there is a State in the Union that appropriates so little for the support of her militia Can we not do better. An appropriation double the sum heretofore set apars would not be felt by any lax-payer in the Commonwealth. I am sure there is no Commonwealth. I am sure there is not a member of either of your honorable bodies who would vote to disband the bodies who would vote to disband the present military organization, for he recognizes the importance of maintaining it. Then, if our safety depends upon continuing it, is it just to throw the burden practically upon the members. They give their time whenever the dignity of the State requires it; they give their time in drilling and becoming proficient in the manual and evolutions, and they should not be required to contribute their means for incidental expenses.

I recommend more liberality than heretofore displayed for the benefit of the volunteer militia.

Volunteer militia.

The experience of the last few years has demonstrated the necessity of supervision of State banks. The National Government has considered it wise—in fact, necessary to exercise supervisory power over national banks, and like flower should be exercised by the State over State banks. Various instances, of re-cent dates, could be ofted where heavy cent dates, could be cited where heavy losses have occurred through the purloining of funds by bank officers, the making of false entries, and the keeping of false accounts, or the gross mismanagement of said banks.

Similar power should be conferred over insurance companies and building and loan associations. During my term frauds have been committed by insurance companies and building and loan associations.

have been committed by insurance com-panies chartered by this State. Without capital, they have advertised extensively

capital, they have advertised extensively for business, and issued policies, and, when loses have occurred, the suffering policy-holders have awakened to the fact that they had been swindled and the swindlers had departed.

Building and loan associations are multiplying rapidly, and becoming important factors in the growth and progress of our State. They gather in the savings of thousands of poor people, and, when properly conducted, they are blessings to those who are without homes. Like

banks and insurance companies, there should be State supervision over these associations.

I therefore recommend that an act be

I therefore recommend that an act of passed creating the office of examiner or commissioner of State banks, insurance companies, and building and loan associations, with such povers as you may deem necessary to protect stockholders, depositors, and policy-holders therein, the saiary or fees of said examiner or commissioner to be paid by said banks, companies, and associations. INSURANCE COMPANIES.

Foreign insurance companies, life and

aminer or commissioner to be paid by said banks, companies, and associations. INSURANCE COMPANIES.

Foteign insurance companies, life and fire, are required to deposit with the Treasurer of the State bonds of the State, United States, or certain cities, to an amount equal to five per centum of their capital stock, not to exceed \$6,000 nor be less than \$10,000. These bonds are held for the sccurity of the insured, and, in case of the default of a company to pay any of its Habilities, the bonds are directed to be sold to satisfy the same. It can work no hardship to require home companies to make deposits upon the same basis. They will draw the interest upon the bonds deposited, and by furnishing security to their policy-holders, will strengthen themselves in the confidence of the public and enlarge their business. No bona fide company, or one sufficiently strong to do business and merit confidence, it seems to me, would object; and, if the deposits are required, no fraudulent concerns could in the future impose themselves upon the public.

I therefore recommend that all insurance companies, life and fire, chartered by this State, and now doing business in this State, and now doing business in this State, be required, within a reasonable time, to be fixed in the act, to deposit with the Treasurer of the State bonds of the State. United States, or such cities as you may designate, to amounts equal to five per centum of their respective capital stocks, not to exceed in any case \$50,000 nor to be less than \$10,000, and that companies, associations, or societies doing business on the mutual or assessment plan be required to deposit the same securities in such amount as

association, or society hereafter charter-ed under the laws of this State shall be permitted to do busines or issue policies or certificates of insurance until it shall have made the deposit required above of companies, associations, and societies now Great interest is being awakened in the

country at large in improved roads, and hope you will recognize the importance of pushing well to the front in the moveof pushing well to the front in the move-ment. That our country roads are gen-erally poor no one will deny. We are inviting immigration and offering in-ducements to settlers in the way of low prices for our fertile and rich lands, but we have done nothing to make the ways over which they must travel and haul, if they come among us, smooth and firm. Many States are already mov-ing, and others are arousing from their lethargy. Shall we sleep and allow them to outstrip us in a matter so essential have railroods rurning in every area.

to transport our products to market, and yet the roadways to them in many sections are so bad that the cost of reaching them is so heavy as to leave the producers little profit after meeting the cost of production. Complaint is frequently made that the freight rates are excessive. This may be true in many instances, but made that the freight rates are excessive. This may be true in many instances, but no effort is made to reduce the expense of hauling to the railroads by improving the public highways. It is my opinion that nothing improves a country more than good reads, and no investment yields the fermer more than the money he pays as road tax, if it is judiciously used, kver since I entered upon the discharge of the duties of my present position is

be required of the citizens, and I am glad of it, for long experience had fully demonstrated that the compulsory system was 'penny-wise and pound-foolish.' Our roads, then, must be worked entirely by taxation. This is settled. How much shall be levied? Our existing stationary of the control much shall be levied? Our existing statiute provides that the tax for road purpose shall not be less than five, nor more
than twenty cents upon every one hundred dollars in value of real and personal property. An examination of the
road levies of the counties discloses the
fact that the average tax is exceedingly
small low unwise! It is no wonder small. How unwise! It is no wonder that the roads are often found impass cort. J. able just at the time the farmer wants and comto take advantage of an advancing market Coast level and, when they are at their best, he included in that four horses cannot haul as a court of much as two on a good road, and that it who shall be an honest and disstable, "who shall be an honest and disstable,"

> During your session plans to secure bet-ter roadways will be laid before you, I and be able to evolve some measure which

ESCAPES FROM JAILS.

Within the last two years escapes from the jails of the countles have been fre-quent. In every instance, I think the escape has resulted from the insecurity of the jail or the negligence of the officer in charge. It seems to me that all re-wards offered for the capture of an es-caped person from the jall of any coun-ty or city, and the expenses incurred in ty or city, and the expenses incurred with the capture, should be a charge upon the county or city and not upon the State. It is the duty of the county or city—not the State—to provide a safe and secure jait, and it is province of the county or city-not State-to provide an efficient officer, and when a person charged with crime and when a person charged with crime is permitted to escape, the county or city—not the State—should be liable for the reward and expenses incurred in his capture. I therefore recommend that any reward offered by the Governor for an escaped prisoner from Jall, and the expenses incident to his capture and return, shall be paid by the State, and then refunded to the State by the county or city from whose fall the escape occurred, out funded to the State by the county or city from whose jail the escape occurred, out of the next annual levy, and that the law be amended to this end. This will have the effect of securing safe jails everywhere, and greater vigilance upon the part of the officers in charge, there-by lessening the number of escapes and reducing the criminal expenses of the Commonwealth.

Commonwealth.

Some time since, a prisoner, convicted of murder, escaped from a jail of one of the counties. I offered a reward of one hundred dollars for his apprehension. He was captured and returned to the same jall, and in a few days he again liberated himself, and is now at large.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

I submit that the laws bearing upon the subject of public health need revision. Within the last year, various localities in the State have had visitations of smallpox and other dangerous contagious dis-eases, and so vague and indefinite was-the statute that the authorities were in doubt as to the course to pursue to protect the communities against the spread of the maladies and at the same time 'n-

In some localities proper precautions were taken and no wrong done; in others, extreme measures were adopted, resulting from unreasonable alarm, which worked injury to business interests.

The Governor, under secton 1714 of the Code, is required to appoint a State Board of Health and Vital Statistics. The duties and powers of this board are too limited, in my opinion, to effect any practical results. It should be abolished, as its title is misleading, or its duties and powers enlarged. I think the latter would be wise.

crist. As the law stands, a community, for want of skilled advice, may be is a direct extreme in precautionary measures. One city or town may, for fear of injury to its business or commercial interests, delay too long or guard imperfectly, while another city or town may become paniestricken and act too hastily or radically. Very many, perhaps ail, of the States, exclusive of Virginia, have boards of health, clothed with powers of a practical character, and they are supported by Fp-propriations Massachuretts appropriates about \$100,000; Illinois about \$20,000; Alahama, \$13,000; Maryland, \$12,000; North Carolina, \$5,500; South Carolina, \$3,000; Tennessee, \$2,000. Our statute provides expressly that our board "shall not is any way be a charge upon the State." I desire, in connection with the question of public health, to direct you to the consideration of the dangers that exist frem the breaking out of infections and contagions in the penitentiary and falls of the Commonwealth. There is no authority to remove a convict or prisoner from either who may contract a contagious disease. He cannot be taken from the prison walls to an isolated place, but must remain and possibly contaminate the prison walls to an isolated place, but must remain and possibly contaminate the prison walls to an isolated place, but must remain and possibly contaminate the prison walls to an isolated place, but pardoned by the Governor, or, if a prisoner awaiting trial, he is discharged by the court.

I recommend that the Governor be authorized, upon the application of the Su-perintendent of the Penitentiary, or the jailor of any county or city, to lirect jailor of eny county or city, to irrect the removal of any felon or prisoner serv-ing a term, who may have contracted a dangerous and contagious disease, to some place to be designated by the su-perintendent or jailor in his application, for treatment, to be returned to the peni-tentiary or jail when he has recovered, unless the term of said felon or prisoner shell have exprised. shall have expired.

I recommend that similar authority be conferred upon the judges in the cases of prisoners awaiting trial.

THE NEW ELECTION LAW.

THE NEW ELECTION LAW.

The act approved March 5, 1894, entitled "An act to provide for the method of
voting by ballot," and known as the
"Waiton law," has been vigorously asrailed and earnestly defended.

I have given the act careful consideration, and, in the performance of my duty,
I shall express my views plainly and
frankly. The object of all election laws
about 0 be securement of order at the caould be the securement of order at the polls, and a free and untrammelled, pure, and unpurchased, expression of the will of the people, through the medium of the

It must be conceded that the system which had prevailed in Virginia for years prior to 1934 had utterly falled to accomplish the object just stated. It cannot be denied that there had been much concusion and disorder at the voting-places, and that large sums of money had been used in every election to corrupt voters by all political parties, and men's ballots had been purchased like stocks in the market. It cannot be denied that the weak in will had been controlled by the strong, that they had been unduly influenced and compelled, for fear of class or race, ostracism or persecution, to reor race, ostracism or persecution, to re-dect the will of others, not their own, and deprived of the free exercise of the

and deprived of the free exercise of the right of suffrage.

That this condition of affairs should cease in the interests of our institutions had long been apparent to every nonest and right-thinking citizen. The General Assembly, fully appreciating the danger to our institutions, which had been interest over the control of the contro to our institutions, which has been in-creasing year by year, undertook the task of reforming our laws in the in-terest of pure elections, and the Wal-ton act was the result of the combinel effort and wisdom of a majority of the

ton act was the result of the comonies, effort and wistom of a majority of the representatives.

Has the act accomplished the purpose for which it was intended?

It has surely re-ured quiet, reaceable, and orderly elections. The excitement, confusion, and disorder, and the backgring, pulling, and hauling of voters, that prevailed to such a disgusting extent, have ceazed. It has rendered the use of money impossible, for the venal voter can no longer be led to the polls by him who has contracted for his vote. It has certainly secured the free, untrammelled, and unpurchased ballot of every voter of ordinary intelligence, for when he enters the booth he is exempt from intimidation and the influence of money, class, and race, and there prepares his own ballot with his own hand, under his own eye, and none other.

So far, the effect of the Walton law must meet with the hearty support of every citizen who values orderly elections, condemns the use of money at the polis, and desires a free, intrammelled, and unpurchased expression of the will of the people.

Now, as to the voters who are 'physically or educationally unable to vote.'

The statute provides that a special con-

write, shall be state, who, after being duly sworn to faithfully discharge his duty, shall, "at the request of any elector who may be physically or educationally unable to vote," render the elector.

duty, shall, "at the request of any elector who may be physically or educationally unable to vote," render the electorsuch assistance as may be necessary in
preparing his ballot.

It is to this provision of the law that
the most stremons objection is made by
the opponents of the act. It is contended
that under it illiterate and blind voters
are placed at the mercy of the special
constable. This is true, but ever since
the ballot system was adopted in Virginia,
until the passage of the Walton law, all
illiterate and blind voters were compelled to rely upon others who were not officers, and were not under oath, to prepare their ballots. The Walton law
gives them a sworn officer, under a heavy
penalty, instead of a private citizen, unbound by the sanctily of an oath. There
can be no force in the objection to the
provision—only on the assumption that
the official, being of the opposite party
of the voter, would probably prepare the
voter. In other words, that the special
constable, being a Democrat or Republican, as the case may be, will likely itjure himself in the interests of his
party. This is a most violent assumption, and, if carried to its logical conclusion, would cast discredit upon every
judge who presides, and every witness
who testifies, in a contested-election case,
or other matter of a political nature. It
would be to hold that a judge cannot
be trusted, nor a witness believed, because he may be corrupted, or may combe trusted, nor a witness believed, be cause he may be corrupted, or may com-mit perjury to subserve party ends. This is more than I am willing to assume.

mit perjury to subserve party ends. This is more than I am willing to assume:

THE OBJECTION.

Does the experience we have had in the operation of the act justify such an assumption? Since its passage we have had three general elections. There are one hundred counties and eighteen cities, and about fourteen hundred voting-places in the State, and at each precinct there was a special constable at each election. I have not heard of an indictment being found, or even charge preferred in form, against a single special constable in any county or city, and this certainly spears well for the integrity of the elections held under the new system; and, if they have been free from corruption and fraud, why amend this provision of the law? "Striving to so better, oft we mar what's well." It may be said that the illiterate voter, in the nature of things, could not detect fraud in the special constable. Detection is easy, and so vigilant have been the opponents of the system it is hardly probable that they would have so utterly failed to find a single case to present if the law had not been honestly administered. But if more than one constable is insisted upon, how many would be suggested? I imagine, of course, one for each independent candidate. Each constable would ther be present as the representative and partisan of his party or eandidate. Every liliterate voter, upon entering the polling-place, unless he intended to deceive, would clearly indicate how he intended to vete by the constable he would select to, prepare his ballot, and the secrecy of the ballot would thereby be destroyed. He would virtually proclaim his vote, and the way for the use of the money, now closed, would be opened up, and full play would be given again to class and race influence and intimidation. It may be urged that with THE OBJECTION.